



26 October 2005



Veterans Day and Thanksgiving Safety

1. The month of November brings two holidays of special significance to Americans: Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. Veterans Day was established to honor our veterans and thank those who continue to serve by defending our freedom and our way of life. Thanksgiving is a time when communities, families, and friends come together to reflect on our freedom and give thanks for our blessings. I ask that you take some time during these holidays to think about members of the USAREUR family who are deployed in support of our Nation's conflicts. If there is a family in your community that has a deployed Soldier, please embrace the family and bring them into yours. I also ask that we all use this time to renew our commitment to the Army Values and to taking care of one another.

2. November in Europe also brings cold weather and darker days. As winter approaches, keep in mind the goal of the Winter Safety Campaign: *No Loss of Life*. So far this year we are way off track and USAREUR Soldiers are dying in vehicle crashes at an alarming rate. It's incredibly difficult to see a Soldier survive repeated combat deployments only to die in a horrific vehicle crash in garrison sanctuary. We can stop this. Our goal can be achieved if every member of the Army in Europe—officers, NCOs, Soldiers, civilians, and family members—makes a commitment to safety over the upcoming holidays and throughout the winter. First-line supervisors must make the difference with "Under the Oak Tree Counseling," while leaders up the chain effectively supervise and insist on meeting the standard.

3. The long weekends associated with the holidays will be accompanied by an increase in travel as well as cold-weather activities such as hiking, skiing, and snowboarding. The potential for accidents and injuries during this time will also increase. No matter how you spend your holidays, include returning to your home / barracks alive in your plans! Adhere to the following:

- Our number-one killer is off-duty vehicular accidents, and most of our serious injuries are from sports and physical activities. If you plan to travel over the long holiday weekends, ensure your vehicle is prepared for travel. Likewise, if you intend to participate in winter sports, ensure that you are properly conditioned for the sport and wear the proper attire. If you are a first-line leader, do not—do not—let your subordinate depart the area until you reach a clear text, verbal contract on behavior on the roads. Ensure your subordinates will not drink and drive.

ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!

B
E
L
L

S
E
N
D
S

#

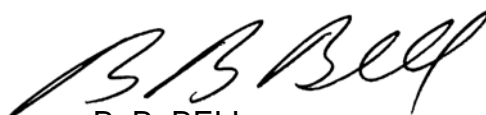
3-06

- As winter approaches, the hours of daylight will decrease and fog will be more common. These factors, along with inclement weather—rain, sleet, and snow—lead to decreased visibility and slippery roads. Drivers must be prepared for a variety of dangerous, icy road conditions, including black ice, glare ice, and white ice. The best way to combat this increased risk is to slow down. Also keep an eye on the weather forecast. If the forecast indicates bad or worsening weather, postpone your travel until conditions improve.

- Fatigue affects reaction time. Recent studies indicate that fatigue may be as dangerous to drivers as the consumption of alcohol. Make sure you get enough sleep before a long drive. Also, avoid traveling alone; use the buddy system to increase the probability of a safe journey. The best approach to safe travel is plenty of rest before and frequent breaks during the trip, and never—never—drink and drive.

4. The measures in paragraph 3 are all part of good composite risk management. Taking these measures can save your life. Ask yourself *what is going to kill me and my buddies?* and adjust your plans accordingly. Leaders, enforce and execute Under the Oak Tree Counseling, and get that contract!

5. If you witness an unsafe act, don't walk by; take action! All of us are responsible for looking out for one other to eliminate crashes that kill our warriors. You must do your part. With everyone's awareness and participation, our goal of *No Loss of Life* is absolutely achievable. Enjoy the holidays, but do so with the intention of coming back alive. I need everyone to return from the holidays prepared to continue executing with excellence Any Mission, Anywhere!



B. B. BELL
General, US Army
Commanding



ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!